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## **Statement by the UN LGBTI Core Group by Minister for Gender Equality and Working Life Paulina Brandberg, at the 68th Session of the Commission on Status of Women**

Published 11 March 2024

Statement by Minister for Gender Equality and Working Life Paulina Brandberg, at the 68th Session of the Commission on Status of Women, New York, 11 March 2024.

Check against delivery.

Chairperson,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Member States of the LGBTI Core Group. The group is co-chaired by Argentina and the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

The UN LGBTI Core Group's overarching goal is to work within the United Nations framework to ensure universal respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all individuals without distinction, regardless of their real or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity or sex characteristics, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) persons. Our particular focus is on protecting LGBTI persons from violence and discrimination.

The members of the LGBTI Core Group stand firmly against any form of violence, discrimination, stigmatization and marginalization on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics. We recognize that to fully realize the mandate of the Commission on the Status of Women, the challenges faced by all LGBTI persons, including LGBTI women, adolescents and girls must be addressed.

The priority theme for the 68th session, "Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective," provides an opportunity for the international community to address the challenges faced by LGBTI women and girls, who often experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and marginalization.

LGBTI persons endure disproportionately high rates of sexual and gender-based violence, including harassment, stigma, inequality, and harmful social and cultural norms. They may contend with a lack of legal gender recognition or even face criminalization due to their sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or sex characteristics.

The deeply rooted inequalities, stigmatization, and discrimination against LGBTI women propels them into spirals of social exclusion, increasing their likelihood of living in poverty and of experiencing economic insecurity, including unemployment, underemployment, lower paid positions, and positions with limited or no benefits.

By addressing poverty through a gender perspective, this session provides a critical platform to address the structural barriers that perpetuate discrimination and exclusion and to spotlight and redress the deeply rooted inequalities and economic disparities faced by LGBTI women. Moreover, the focus on strengthening

institutions and financing with a gender transformative approach aligns with the imperative to dismantle systemic barriers and ensure inclusive policies that respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of all women and girls, including LGBTI women and girls, fostering a more equitable and empowered future for all, thus fulfilling the very notion of the 2030 Agenda of leaving no one behind.

The Core Group recognizes the resilience of LGBTI women human rights defenders and women's civil society organizations and their role as key actors that contribute to implementing the 2030 Agenda and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, promoting laws and policies that guarantee gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in all their diversity and responding to the needs of those most impacted by structural inequality and gender injustice. Therefore, it is important that inclusive and locally-led feminist movements and women's rights organizations are supported to perform their essential roles.

We call on all Member States and all relevant stakeholders to work together to guarantee labour standards that provide for decent work and gender equality for all workers, including LGBTI women, equal pay for work of equal value, safe and healthy working conditions, freedom of association and the right to organize and bargain collectively, and freedom from violence, discrimination, and harassment in the world of work, including sexual and gender-based violence and harassment.

We encourage Member States to promote social protection systems, public services, and sustainable infrastructure are fully inclusive of LGBTI persons, and responsive to the specific challenges LGBTI women face in a context of ongoing social exclusion, while addressing the structural and systemic impediments to poverty alleviation and equitable financing.

Together, we must ensure this Commission addresses the intersectional challenges of women and girls in all their diversity. The LGBTI Core Group reiterates that the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action requires that all forms of violence, discrimination and political, social and economic exclusion of any individual, including LGBTI women and girls, must end.

Standing up against violations and abuses of all human rights, including discrimination and exclusion of any person, is not and should never be a matter of controversy. We appeal to all delegations gathered here at the 68th session of the Commission on the Status of Women to join us in our continued advocacy for the universality of human rights and the pledge to leave no one behind.

Thank you.

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